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The Doctrine of the Six-stage Mindfulness of Breathing

KL DHAMMAJOTI 法光

1. Introduction

Mindfulness of breathing occupies a unique place in the Buddhist system of meditation praxis. Besides the sixteen-mode exposition, this meditation is also described as being accomplished in six or four stages. Thus, it is stated in the *Abhidharmakośa* that

This [mindfulness of breathing] comes to be perfected when endowed with six operations. (*ṣaḍkāraṇayuktā caiṣā paripūrṇā bhavati*)¹

This doctrine is not attested in the *sūtra* or the canonical Abhidharma texts. In this connection, we may note that in the *Śāriputrābhidharma*, a very ancient Abhidharma text, apparently of the canonical status, as well as the **Ārya-vasumitra-saṃgrhīta*, a pre-*Mahāvibhāṣā*² text, whereas the sixteen-mode doctrine is described in great details, this six-stage doctrine is conspicuously absent. It is therefore likely to have been developed in the commentarial tradition, at a relatively later date. But this date cannot be too late either, since it is commonly found in the *dhyāna sūtra*-s (禪經) preserved in Chinese translation which record the teachings of the early Dārṣṭāntika masters and also in some early Buddha biographies.³ In the Theravāda, it is expounded only in Venerable Buddhaghosa's *Visuddhimagga* and its commentaries. If we count the **Vimuktimārga* (解脫道論)⁴ composed in India as a Theravāda text, then this is the earliest extant Theravāda text in which the doctrine is attested.⁵ In the northern tradition, it became the standard exposition in the post-canonical Abhidharma texts such as the *Abhidharma-mahāvibhāṣā* (大毗婆沙論).

2. Enumeration of the stages in the various commentaries

The enumeration in the following texts are representative of this doctrine found in the southern and northern traditions.⁶ I have tried to reflect the terminologies as they are found in the texts themselves, even though in some cases, the different Chinese renderings of a particular term are most probably those of one and the same Sanskrit/Prākṛit term (e.g., *vivartana*/*vivaṭṭanā*):

- Thera:**⁷ I. Counting (*gaṇanā*), II. following (*anubandhanā*), III. touching (*phusanā*), IV. stilling (*ṭhapanā*), V. observing (*sallakkhaṇā*), VI. transforming/turning (*vivaṭṭanā*), VII. purity (*parisuddhi*), VIII. reviewing (*tesañ ca paṭipassanā*).
- Vmm:**⁸ I. Counting, II. following, III. stilling, IV. observing.
- GASS(1):**⁹ I. Counting, II. following, III. stilling, IV. observing.
- GASS(2):**¹⁰ I. Counting, II. following, III. stilling, IV. observing, V. turning, VI. purity.
- YB:**¹¹ I. Counting, II. following, III. stilling—observing (止觀), IV. reverting¹² – purity (還淨).
- Sarv:**¹³ I. Counting (數 *gaṇanā*), II. following (隨 *anugama*), III. stilling (止 *sthāpanā*), IV. observing (觀 *upalakṣaṇā*), V. transforming/turning (轉 *vivarttana*), VI. complete purity (淨 *parisuddhi*).
- MAS:**¹⁴ I. Counting, II. following, III. stilling, IV. observing, V. reverting, VI. purity.

It can be seen that Venerable Buddhaghosa's *Visuddhimagga* (and *Samantapāsādikā*, including its Chinese translation, 善見律毘婆沙 T24, no.1462, 747b–c) enumerates eight stages. These, however, are clearly reducible to the same six stages as enumerated in other texts above. This eight-stage enumeration seems to be Buddhaghosa's innovation, and is possibly influenced by the northern text, Vmm. In the Vsm, in the course of expounding on the sixteen-modes, it is in the first tetrad which he explains as constituting the *ānāpānasati-kammaṭṭhāna*, that he introduces the eight-stage practice as the method of fixing attention (*manasikāra-vidhi*) on this *kammaṭṭhāna*.¹⁵ This, we may note is essentially the same as in Vmm. (See §3).

In any case, Buddhaghosa's eight stages can easily be seen to be reducible to only six: the third, *phusanā*, is “the place of contact [of the breath] (*puṭṭhaṭṭhāna*)” and the fourth, *ṭhapanā*, is “fixing the mind [on the breath]”. That is, the two can be seen as constituting really a single stage for achieving one-pointed-ness of thought,¹⁶ and in his explanation, he certainly connects the two together. Thus, he states:

The meditative development (*bhāvanā*) is attained when the person in meditation has fixed (*ṭhapetvā*) his mindfulness on the place touched repeatedly.

As another instance, he states:

While applying his mind by following, he should not do so through the beginning, middle and end. Rather, he should apply his mind through touching and fixing.¹⁷

In the Vmm, we in fact find these two being described together:

Stilling — The place of contact (觸處 cf. *phuṭṭhaṭṭhāna* of Vsm) of the in- and out-breath is at the nose-tip or on the lip. On that [spot], when one has the ideation of wind and makes mindfulness stay, it is called stilling.¹⁸

As to the last item, *paṭipassanā* in the Vsm, it is no more than a statement of the need to practise the preceding ones repeatedly.

3. The four-stage variant

Not only are Buddhaghosa's eight stages reducible to six. According to some northern texts, the whole operation is subsumable under four stages. In the Vmm, it is after describing the attainment of concentration and achievement (具足) of the sign of *dhyāna* in the course of the sixteen-mode practice that it states:

[At this stage], the meditator has already acquired the quiescent excellent four *dhyāna*-s, as is explained in details at the beginning. Further, the former teachers spoke of the *fourfold* mindfulness of breathing, namely: counting (算 *gaṇanā*), following (隨逐 *anubandhanā*), stilling (安置 *sthāpanā*), observing (隨觀 **upalakṣaṇā*).¹⁹

Accordingly, the Vmm on which the Vsm is believed to have been based, actually enumerates only four stages in the same context corresponding to the Vsm. At least from one perspective, the Vmm seems more reasonable in doing so, since just as in the Vsm, the doctrine is expounded at stage of the practice of *samatha-vīpaśyanā*, not at the stage of attaining spiritual fruition which is marked by the last three stages of Buddhaghosa's eight stages.

In this connection, we may note further that, there are at least two more northern texts which also enumerate only four stages: the GASS and the YB. (See above). The GASS is of a very ancient date, being a translation of An Shi Gao (安世高 *circa* 2nd century A.D.). Although it is entitled a *sūtra*, we know from its prefaces that it is really a commentary incorporating explanatory material.²⁰ Interestingly, although this text subsequently goes on to additionally enumerate the six stages (GASS(2)), it first states that there are four stages (GASS(1)) of *ānāpānasmr̥ti*:

There is the fourfold *ānāpānasmr̥ti* practice for the beginner. He should eliminate two defects, and [practise] the sixteen excellent [modes]. ... What are the four? 1. counting, 2. following, 3. stilling, 4. observing. What are the two defects? He must not count more than 10 or less than 10. What are the sixteen excellent [modes]? At that time, he understands himself "[I am] breathing long" ...²¹

4. Explanations of the six stages in the MVŚ

This six-stage doctrine is the main exposition on *ānāpānasmṛti* in the MVŚ. It states that “the characteristic of this *ānāpānasmṛti* is to be understood in terms of the six operations (*ṣaḍ-kāraṇa*).”²² “Those who are endowed with these six operations are said to have perfected [the meditation]. Those not endowed [with them] are not said to have perfected.”²³

I. Counting: There are five types of counting, including “full counting” which is from 1 to 10 and “pure counting” which counts the in-breathing from 1 to 5 and the out-breathing from 1 to 5. One should first count the in-breathing, then the out-breathing, because at the time of birth, one breathes in and at death one breathes out. Also, in this way, the mind and body experience peace and comfort (安隱, *kṣema*) and there is no topsy-turviness.

II. Following: One binds the *citta* to follow the respiration from outside entering within. That is: The *citta* follows it from the mouth or the nostril, flowing to the throat. From the throat, it flows on to the chest. From the chest, it flows on to the navel; and successively in this way up to the toes. Next, the *citta* follows the breath from inside to outside, further and further out.

III. Stilling: One watches first the breath abide on the mouth or the nostril, next on the throat, next on the chest, next on the navel. In this way successively up to the toes, following where the breath stays/stills, the *citta* abides thereon and watches it. According to some: stilling means making the *citta* stay to observe that the breath is staying within the whole body like a thread within a bead.

IV. Observing: When the breath reaches the mouth or the nostril, one observes carefully; in this way successively up to when it reaches the toes. Having observed the breath, one further reflects: Within this mass of breath there are the four Great Elements; from them are generated the derived matter; these derived matter are the support bases of thought and thought-concomitants. In this way, the meditator, beginning with observing the breath, comes to be able to successively observe the five aggregates of grasping.

V. Transforming/changing: This means transforming the mindfulness of breathing to give rise to mindfulness on the body (*kāya-smṛtyupasthāna*); and so on successively up to mindfulness on the *dharma-s* (*dharma-smṛtyupasthāna*). According to a second opinion: this stage includes the four *nirvedha-bhāgīya-s* which immediately precede the preparatory stage. According to a third opinion: It starts with the stage of the four abodes of mindfulness and goes up to the stage of the Diamond-like *samādhi* (*vajropama-samādhi*). Any stage that still involves defilements is not yet considered the stage of purity.

VI. Purity: This refers to the stage of warmed-up, etc. (the four *kuśala-mūla*-s of the *prayoga* stage) up to the stage of the non-trainee (*arhat*). According to those of the second opinion: This starts from the stage of *duḥkha-dharma-jñāna-kṣānti* (i.e., the first moment of the path of vision) and is up to the stage of the non-trainee. According to those of the third opinion: It is only after the knowledge of exhaustion (*kṣaya-jñāna*) has arisen that one can call it the stage of purity.

The MVŚ tells us that, among these six stages, according to some: the first three pertain to *śamatha*, the last three, *vipaśyanā*; according to some others, the converse is the case. According to the compilers of the MVŚ: all may pertain to *śamatha*, or all may pertain to *vipaśyanā*.²⁴ This is in keeping with the Sarvāstivāda emphasis that *śamatha* and *vipaśyanā* in the proper sense are non-divorceable.²⁵

5. Explanations in the *Abhidharmakośa-bhāṣya* and the **Nyāyānusāra*

The explanations below, given in the AKB, are literal translations from the text.

I. Counting

Placing the *citta* on the in-and out-breathing, without making effortful exertion, letting go (*adhyupekṣya*) the body and *citta* and with mere mindfulness, one counts one, two ...²⁶

II. Following

Without making effortful exertion, he follows the movement of the in- and out-breathing: [He applies mindful thus]: “How far do these [breaths] enter or leave? Do they pervade the whole body or go they travel in one part [of the body]?” He follows them entering sequentially the throat, the heart, the navel, the kidneys, the thigh, [and so on] up to the two feet. He follows them exiting, traveling the length of one (*vitastī*²⁷ 磔) and one fathom (*vyāma*²⁸). According to some: he [follows the out-breath] to as far as the Wind Disc (*vāyu-maṇḍala*)²⁹ and to the *Vairambha* winds.³⁰ This is not right, for this [mindfulness of breathing] is a mental application on the real (*tattva-manasikāra* 真實作意) [not the imagined].

III. Stilling

He sees the [breaths] fixed on the nose-tip, [or any point from between the eyebrows]³¹ up to the toes of the foot, like the thread of a jewel. [He is mindful:] “Are they beneficial or harmful [to the body]? Are they cold or warm?”

IV. Observing

[He observes:] “These [breaths] are not merely winds. [Together with them] are the four Great Elements, the matter produced from the Great Elements,

and the thought and thought-concomitants (*citta-caitta*) which are dependent on them [for their arising].” In this way, he observes [all] the five aggregates.

V. Turning/transforming

He changes the awareness (*buddhi* 覺) which takes the wind as its cognitive object and fixes it onto the more and more superior skilful roots, [from warmed-up] up to the supreme worldly *dharmas*.³²

VI. Complete purity

This is the entry into the path of vision (*darśana-mārga*), etc.

According to some:³³ Changing (V) [covers the stage of] the abodes of mindfulness, etc., right up to the Diamond-like *samādhi*. Purity [covers attainments] right up to the knowledge of exhaustion (*kṣaya-jñāna*), etc.

Samghabhadra's explanations in his Ny is on the whole similar to those in the AKB, except that they are a little more elaborate at times. On II, following, he also cites the opinions of the two groups of masters. One speaks of the practitioner following the breath which exits from below the feet and travels up to the Wind Disc and then returns. The other says that the practitioner is mindful that the out-breath goes as high up as the region of the *virambha* winds and then returns. (These two regions are the boundary extremities wherein there is wind exists).³⁴ In this connection, Samghabhadra criticizes Vasubandhu's rejection of the explanations of these masters:

The *sūtrakāra* (i.e. Vasubandhu) here refutes those masters saying that this mindfulness arises with a mental application on the real, and it is not correct that he applies mindfulness up to the Wind Disc, etc. [But this refutation is incorrect, because] they say that although the fundamental/root (本根) mindfulness of breathing is accompanied by a mental application on the real, there are other arising in between which are conjoined with mental application based on *adhimukti* (*adhimukti-manaskāra*). It is with a view to hasten the mental application on the real that he generates such visualization (假想) in between. Although this is the case, there is no fallacy in respect of the mindfulness of breathing, since the intention (*āśaya*) and preparatory effort for the mindfulness of breathing do not cease.³⁵

It would seem that this doctrine of the six stages developed out of a tradition of the actual practice of the meditation. The above descriptions in the Sarvāstivāda texts show clearly that, just as in the doctrine of the sixteen-mode mindfulness of breathing,³⁶ the six stages can cover the whole range of practice leading to as far as complete Enlightenment. As far as this point is concerned, both traditions, southern and northern, agrees completely.

On the basis of the *samādhi* and mindfulness acquired through the operation of counting, following, stilling and contemplative observation in the practice of the

mindfulness of breathing, the practitioner sails into the abodes of mindfulness (*smṛty-upasthāna*). This is the stage of *vivartana*. According to some Sarvāstivāda masters, this stage covers as far as the complete exhaustion of all defilements. In other words, at this stage, the meditator changes his object of meditative focus from breathing to those involved in progressively higher levels of spiritual praxis. The stage of purity is the culmination of the path of spiritual progress when *arhat*-hood is attained.

5.1. A critique of the six-stage doctrine

It appears, however, that the six- or four-stage doctrine is not a unanimously accepted teaching. Harivarman, for one, criticizes it in his **Satyasiddhi-śāstra*, preferring to stick to the sixteen-mode doctrine:

Question: What is the accomplishment of this mindfulness of breathing?

Answer: It is accomplished when the practitioner has acquired these sixteen modes. According to some masters: it is fully accomplished on account of the six reasons (以六因緣故, 名具足)³⁷ ... [But] this is not necessarily so. Why? Among these [six] stages, one need not employ the two *dharma*-s, counting and following. The practitioner can eliminate *vitarka* merely by fixing the *citta* on the breath. Hence, it is fully accomplished when the sixteen modes are practised. Moreover, the full accomplishment is not definite in form: what is practised by a person of slow/inferior faculty is not considered as a full accomplishment for one who is of a sharp/superior faculty.³⁸

6. Description in the **Dharmatrāta-dhyāna-sūtra* (達摩多羅禪經)

The **Dharmatrāta-dhyāna-sūtra*, a manual generally preserving the meditative praxis of the ancient Sarvāstivāda tradition, subsumes the six stages under the progress portion (昇進分 *viśeṣa-bhāgīya*) of the stage of preparation (方便道 *prayoga-mārga*). This is in a way similar to the treatment in the Vsm and the Vmm where the eight/four stages are expounded after the first tetrad of the sixteen modes, before the attainment of the *jhāna*-s and other higher attainments. However, it must be remembered that, according to all the textual traditions discussed above, the six-stage cultivation ultimately leads to nothing less than arhthood. This would mean that we should understand the six-stage practice (just as in the case of the sixteen-mode cultivation) not as a linear progression, but a spiral path — progressing at ever higher and higher level. The description on this spiral nature of the *ānāpānasmṛti* practice in general is especially explicit since it divides the practice in four progressive levels each further subdivided into two stages of preparation and advancement.

I shall here give only the explanations on *vivartana* and *parisuddhi* described in this text. It describes *vivartana* as follows:³⁹

...
Having observed what has to be observed,
he further gives rise to other practices.
When his mind, in observing the wind,
has well penetrated with regard to turning (還),
the practitioner is then said to be
skilled in *vivartana* (迴轉).
This is like a person who has traveled in town,
returning home after completing what had to be done.
Having practised *upalakṣaṇa* (觀) thus,
his joy increases progressively.⁴⁰

Unlike in the MVŚ and other Sarvāstivāda texts, it explains *parisuddhi* as the stage when mindfulness has become taintless, completely freed from all the hindrances. Having accomplished the operation of *gaṇanā*, the contemplative observation of the one endowed with *prajñā* (慧者) is pure in as much as he has abandoned *rāga* internally. Having accomplished *anubandhanā*, reflecting properly, the mindfulness of the one endowed with knowledge (智者) is pure in as much as he has abandoned *rāga* externally. The *citta* of such a *bhikṣu* has been stilled (*sthāpita*), unperturbed by perturbances. Thus cultivating with unshaken mindfulness, he has acquired the purity in knowledge. Being freed from doubt in the contemplative observation of the boundary extremities of wind, and no more seeking the breaths, he is at the stage of purity. It is also called purity when, having completed the stage (地 *bhūmi*) of mindfulness, there is no more faults pertaining to its support-basis. At this instant, the *guṇa* subsumed under the preparatory path of *ānāpānasmṛti* is said to have abided at the stage of advance.⁴¹

7. The early Yogācāra tradition

Instead of the six-stage doctrine, the whole process of the mindfulness of breathing practice is prescribed somewhat differently in the Yogācāra. It speaks of a five-fold practice (*pañcavidhaḥ paricayaḥ*) ending with the sixteen-mode *ānāpānasmṛti*: 1. The practice of counting (*gaṇanā*). 2. The practice of penetrating into the aggregates (*skandhāvatāra*). 3. The practice of penetrating into conditioned co-arising (*pratītyasamutpādāvatāra*). 4. The practice of penetrating into the Truths (*satyāvatāra*). 5. The sixteen-mode practice (*ṣoḍaśākāra-paricaya*).⁴²

1. We can see that the first step corresponds to I of the six stages. This is subdivided into four types: (i) counting one as one; (ii) counting two as one; (iii) counting in the direct order (*anuloma-gaṇanā*); (iv) counting in the reverse

order (*pratiloma-gaṇanā*). Having mastered the practice (*kṛta-paricaya*) of counting in the direct and reverse order and become undistracted in the process, the practitioner proceeds to what is called “advanced counting” (*gaṇanā-viśeṣa*). For instance, if he takes the counting of one as one as his basis, then he now combines the in- and out-breathing to be counted as one, in this way successively up to 10, and in this way gradually up to taking 100 as one, etc. When he has fully mastered counting in this way, *prasrabdhi* arises and he can attain one-pointed-ness of mind.

2. He then proceeds to penetrate into the five aggregates by the mental application on first the *rūpa-skandha* comprising the in- and out-breaths and the body which constitutes their support (*aśraya*). Next, mental application with regard to the sensation aggregate — the sensation conjoined with the mindfulness. Next mental application with regard to the ideation aggregate — the act of understanding by combining (characteristic, name, and the signified), *saṃjānanā* (等了). Next, mental application with regard to the aggregate of the conditionings (*saṃskāra-skandha*) — the mindfulness (*smṛti*) and the volition (*cetanā*) and understanding (*prajñā*) etc. conjoined with mindfulness. Next, mental application with regard to the cognition (*viññāna*) aggregate — the *citta*, *manas*, *viññāna* conjoined with the mindfulness.
3. In this way, when he can, without being topsy turvy, sees that there are just the mere aggregates (*skandha-mātra*), mere conditionings (*saṃskāra-mātra*), mere entities (*vastu-mātra*) — he has penetrated into the conditioned co-arising of conditionings.
4. When he has mastered conditioned co-arising, he further penetrates into the fact that all these conditionings, co-arisen dependently (*pratītya-samutpanna*), are impermanent. “Being impermanent, they come into being not having been; having come into being, they disintegrate.”⁴³ From the fact of impermanence, he realizes *duḥkha*, etc., and thus penetrates into the Truth of Unsatisfactoriness. Contemplating in this way, he further realizes that the cause of unsatisfactoriness is craving (*trṣṇā*), and that its complete cessation is peaceful and excellent. He further realizes thus: “If I abide repeatedly in this way, there will be the complete abandonment of craving.” In this manner, he also penetrates into the Truths of Origination, Cessation and the Path, and therefore acquires Direct Realization (*abhisamaya*) of the Truths, and is able to abandon those defilements to be abandoned through the path of vision.
5. He now still has to work on the remaining defilements to be abandoned through the path of cultivation. To this end, he takes up the sixteen-mode practice of *ānāpāna-smṛti*.

8. Conclusion

The six-stage doctrine was very probably originated with the northern commentarial traditions, most likely within the broad Sarvāstivāda lineage. Venerable Buddhaghosa's eight-stage version could well have been a development on the basis of the four-stage doctrine in the Vmm. This four-stage enumeration is shared by at least two other extant northern texts.

Although the six-stage doctrine came to generally represent the main exposition on *ānāpānasmṛti* in the northern tradition, it did not seem to have been unanimously accepted, as evidenced by the criticism in the **Satyasiddhi-śāstra*. Interestingly, the early Yogācāra tradition, while inheriting the sixteen-mode exposition, in its essential, does not teach the six-stage doctrine, but offers instead a five-stage exposition on *ānāpānasmṛti* culminating in the sixteen-mode practice.

There are differences between the Theravāda and Sarvāstivāda lineages concerning the detailed explanations on the stages. Of particular interest is that on the stage of following. The Sarvāstivāda texts here clearly contain an element of visualization operated through *adhimukti*. Such a feature is not to be found in all the expositions, whether southern or northern, on the sixteen-modes.

Like the sixteen-mode exposition, the six-stage doctrine covers all the stages of spiritual progress right up to *arhat*-hood. Accordingly, *ānāpānasmṛti* is no mere "breathing exercise", nor is it to be confined to merely the *śamatha* category of meditation. There is, however, some exception, as in the **Dharmatrāta-dhyāna-sūtra* which includes it under the path of preparation. In this respect, it is similar to the exposition on *ānāpānasmṛti* in the Theravāda as well as the early Yogācāra traditions in that the meditation is fully accomplished only at the culmination of the sixteen-mode operation. However, the divergence on this point from the rest of the textual traditions discussed does not seem so significant when it is remembered that both the sixteen-mode and the six-stage cultivations properly speakly represent a spiral, rather than linear, path of progress.

Abbreviations

AKB = Pradhan, P. ed., *Abhidharmakośabhāṣyam of Vasubandhu*. 2nd edn (Patna, 1975)

GASS = **Greater Discourse on ānāpānasmṛti* 大安般守意經
(GASS(1) and GASS(2) stand for the two different versions of the enumeration in this same text)

MVŚ = 大毘婆沙論 T27, no. 1545

Ny = **Nyāyānusāra* 順正理論 T29, no. 1562

Sarv = Sarvāstivāda lineage

ŚrBh = *Śrāvaka-bhūmi*, ed., The Institute of Comprehensive Studies of Buddhism, Taishō University. (Tokyo, 2007)

Thera = Theravāda lineage

Vmm = **Vimuktimārga* 解脫道論 T15, no.1648

Vsm = *Visuddhimagga* PTS edition

YB = **Yogācārabhūmi* 修行道地經 T no. 606

Notes

¹ AKB, 339.

² The compilation of the *Abhidharma-mahāvibhāṣā* was completed around 150 A.D.

³ E.g., 太子瑞應本起經, T2, no.185, 476c; 修行本起經, T3, no. 469c; etc.

⁴ As we do not know the language of the Indian original, I have given its restored title, and also terms discussed in this text, in Sanskrit, without implying that Sanskrit was actually the language of the original.

⁵ This Indian work, said to be by Upaṭiṣya (優波低沙) is now extant only in its Chinese translation, T15, no.1648.

⁶ For the purpose of the present discussion, the distinction between “southern” and “northern” is a geographical one: the southern textual tradition refers to the Theravāda texts in Sri Lanka, etc., and the northern textual tradition refers to texts originating from continental India. From this perspective, the Vmm, though a text of the Theravāda lineage, is classified under the northern textual tradition.

⁷ Vsm, 278; Chinese translation of the *Samantapāsādikā* (善見律毘婆沙), T24, 747b.

⁸ T32, 430b: 先師說四種念安般:所謂算隨逐安置隨觀。

⁹ T15, 165a: 有四種安般守意行:… 一為數, 二為相隨, 三為止, 四為觀。

¹⁰ T15, 166a.

¹¹ T15, no.606, 216a: 修行者欲求寂, 當知安般出入息, 無有二瑕, 曉四事。當有奇特十六變。何謂四事? 一謂數息, 二謂相隨, 三謂止觀, 四謂還淨。於是頌曰: 當以數息及相隨, 則觀世間諸萬物, 還淨之行制其心; 以四事宜而定意。

¹² Both 還 here and 轉 in MVŚ translate *vivartana*.

¹³ MVŚ, 134c–135b; AKB 339 f; Ny, 673c–674a.

¹⁴ **Mahānāpanasamṛti-sūtra* 大安般守意經, T15, no.602, 166a, etc.

¹⁵ Vsm, 278.

¹⁶ Cf. Buddhaghosa's definition of *appanā*: *ekaggaṃ cittaṃ ārammaṇe appeti* (‘the one-pointed mind fixes on the cognitive object’).

¹⁷ cf. Vsm, 279: *phuṭṭhaphuṭṭhokāse pana satim̐ ṭhapetvā bhāventass' eva bhāvanā sampajjati*. Also, Vsm, 280: *anubandhanāya manasikarontena ādimajjhapariyosānavasena na manasikātabaṃ | api ca kho phusanāvasena ca ṭhanāvasena ca manasikātabaṃ |*

¹⁸ T32, 430b.

¹⁹ T32, 430b.

²⁰ See 望月佛教大辭典, 3190b–c.

²¹ T15, 165a. The 16 modes (*ṣoḍaśākāra*) refer to those enumerated in the *sūtra* and commentaries, constituting the fourfold *smṛtyupasthāna*-s. See *Majjhima-nikāya*, vol. III, 82 f; Vsm, 267; MVŚ, 136a–c; etc. See also, Dhammajoti, KL, ‘The sixteen-mode Mindfulness of Breathing’, in *Journal of Buddhist Studies* (2008, Colombo), vol. VI, 251–288.

²² MVŚ, 134c.

²³ MVŚ, 135b.

²⁴ MVŚ, 135b.

²⁵ Cf. *Sanṅgītiparyāya-pāda-śāstra* T26, 375b–c: In the context of explaining *śamatha* and *vipaśyanā*, it states:

“There is no *dhyāna* (= *śamatha*) for one without *prajñā* (= *vipaśyanā*)” — If one has such a *prajñā*, then one has attained a corresponding category of *dhyāna*. If one does not have such a *prajñā*, then one has not attained such a *dhyāna*.

“No *prajñā* for one without *dhyāna*” — If one has *prajñā* which is born of *dhyāna* and has *dhyāna* as its origination; this category of *prajñā*²⁶ is projected by *dhyāna*. If one has such a category of *dhyāna*, then there can be the attainment of such a category of *prajñā*. If one does not have such a *dhyāna*, then one cannot attain such a *prajñā*.

²⁶ AKB, 339: *āśvāsaprasvāseṣu cittaṃ dattvā’nabhisamkāreṇa kāyaṃ cittaṃ cādhyupekṣya smṛtimātreṇa gaṇayaty ekaṃ dva ...* |

²⁷ A measure of length spanning between the extended thumb and the little finger, said to be about 9 inches.

²⁸ A measure of the length of the two extended arm.

²⁹ The universe is supported on it.

³⁰ A very violent wind blowing in very high attitudes.

³¹ Following Xuan Zang, T29, 118b: 或在眉間乃至 ...

³² The four “skilful roots” pertaining to penetrating to penetration (*nirvedha-bhāgīya*) are *uṣmagata*, *mūrdhan*, *kṣānti*, *laukikāgradharma* immediately after acquiring which the practitioner enters into the path of vision (*darśana-mārga*).

³³ See MVŚ explanations above; also Vy, 528: *uttarottareṣu kuśala-mūleṣv iti smṛty-upasthānoṣmagat’ādiṣv iti* |

³⁴ Cf. *Dharmatrāta-dhyāna-sūtra*, T15, 306b: 極風處.

³⁵ Ny, 674a.

³⁶ See Dhammajoti, KL, *op. cit.*

³⁷ Cf. AKB, 339: *ṣaḍkāraṇayuktā caiṣā paripūrṇā bhavati* |

³⁸ T32, 356b.

³⁹ The whole text is in stanzas. My translation attempts to reflect the original as literally as possible, together with its division of *pāda*.

⁴⁰ T15, no.618, 307b.

⁴¹ T15, 307c. The description I have given here is almost a literal translation.

⁴² ŚrBh, 84.

⁴³ ŚrBh, 94: *anityatvād abhūtvā ca bhavanti bhūtvā prativigacchanti* | This is also the well known Vibhajyāda position of the Sautrāntikas.